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27 December 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR: FILE

SUBJECT: The Present Use and Future Potential of the
Propaganda Broadcasting Vessel

REFERENCE: [] Memorandum of 21 December 1949

1. The Visualized Scope of its Employment in Project BGFIEND.

a. A joint British-American Memorandum under date of 6 December 1949 re-examined the objectives of Project BGFIEND. This Memorandum, approved by ADPC and by the Department of State, stated in Paragraph 7 (b-3) that we should proceed immediately with the setting-up of facilities for clandestine broadcasts in the name of the Committee for Free Albania.

b. It has been agreed that these broadcasts shall be based, for various technical, security and political reasons, on a ship to cruise in and around the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. A suitable vessel has been located and is available for immediate purchase. This vessel with minor modifications can be converted into a floating broadcasting station capable of sending medium-wave broadcasts into all points in Albania. It will be operated in a 100-mile arc at the end of a 300-mile radius from the farthest point to be covered in the country.

c. The broadcasting arc will be well below the heel of Italy, near Malta, and approximately 180 miles from the nearest Albanian port.

2. OPC Control Over the Propaganda Broadcasting Vessel.

a. The vessel will be purchased through and operated under a British-devised cover. Several covers are presently under consideration. A Memorandum for the File will describe the final cover story after approval both by OPC and the British.

b. The initial bid authorized for the vessel, which is offered at 20,000 pounds, will be for 15,000 pounds. This offer is contingent upon a satisfactory two-hour sea trial, the report of the marine surveyor's inspection, and joint satisfaction regarding

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several weight questions raised by the installation of the commo equipment. If this bid is not accepted our field representative has been authorized by Wash. No. 5867 to handle step by step negotiation of the purchase, raising the bid to a maximum of 18,000 pounds. In support of the option to buy, a holding deposit of 10 percent of the bid has been authorized.

Inasmuch as, for reasons of cover, payment to the present owners must be made in pounds through a British cut-out, our agreement calls only for reimbursement of the British. When they have advised us whether reimbursement is to be effected in London or in Washington and whether in dollars or in pounds, we will advise Confidential Funds. The maximum requirement for the purchase, subject to British desire, would be \$56,000 in dollars in the U.K. in one week's time. This figure includes the cost of title transfer, marine inspection, and re-insurance.

c. Due to the exigencies of cover and security, no estimate for refit (including modification) can be secured prior to purchase. However, it is estimated that the OPC share of the cost of refit should not exceed \$7,500, excluding the commo equipment which is already paid for. As soon as the purchase is concluded, an OPC Commo man will proceed to UK to supervise the installation work and he will procure a more definite estimate for the refit at that time.

d. OPC's legal ownership of the vessel will be evidenced by a Memorandum of Understanding, reduced to writing, and signed by the British. It is envisioned at this time that actual title, for cover reasons, will rest with the British cut-out, who in turn will execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the British.

e. Fifty percent of all costs of operation of the vessel will be borne by OPC. Upon receipt from Confidential Funds of a Memorandum of Instruction describing the type of billing which they require for accounting purposes in order to reimburse the British, that information will be transmitted to the British.

f. Full OPC operational control of the vessel will be possible, even though the crew will be furnished by the British, because it will be based upon (and all broadcasts prepared by) an Executive Center in Athens which will be under the direction of an OPC chief. At intervals the vessel will return to Athens and the Chief will receive reports from the Staff aboard on the conduct of the operation.

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g. In the interim while the vessel is at sea, OPC operational control will continue since program broadcasts will be monitored by the Executive Center and policy direction will be sent by W/T from the OPC Chief to the vessel.

3. Propaganda Use of the Vessel.

a. By sending timely, slanted reports on current events in Albania, as picked up by the Monitor at the Executive Center, forwarded to the vessel by W/T, recorded on tape aboard, and broadcast at appropriate hours, the vessel will be able to capitalize on any internal confusion.

b. By sending feature broadcasts, recorded at the Executive Center and incorporating the basic themes supplied by PB-II, the vessel will hammer away at all fundamental dichotomies within Albania, both economic and political. Its use will be consonant with the restated BGFIEND objective of weakening or eliminating the usefulness to the Cominform of Albania as a base for operations against Yugoslavia.

4. Future Use of the Vessel.

Of primary importance in the full evaluation of the broadcasting vessel is the fact that, once acquired and modified, it will represent a continual operational asset to OPC, an asset which may be utilized without delay in any number of situations which may arise out of existing or future projects. It is capable of operation in any waters, Scandinavian, Oriental, or Mediterranean, under a wide variety of covers and crews, either for the dissemination of propaganda or for liaison with resistance forces ashore.



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